

# Parenting Views



September—October 2006

## “Encouraging Our Children and Ourselves”

### NOBODY’S PERFECT

Begin by granting yourself the right to make mistakes, treat mistakes as opportunities to learn.

Accept your child “as is” rather than waiting until she “succeeds.”

Recognize participation and love are what children thrive on. Listening shows love.

Express appreciation to your child for his help. Remember to say “Thank you.”

Affirm your child as a special individual. Tell your child how you enjoy her.

Remember that children need firmness as well as affirmation.

Learn to be patient with your child and yourself. Be forgiving when things do not go well.

Each day check your level of energy and optimism, or frustration and discouragement.

Make time for yourself—to rest, to play, to be alone, to be with others.

Ask your partner for support. If you are on your own, ask others.

Talk to other parents.

When you talk to professionals about your child, be sure your concerns are heard and considered.

When you need help, see that you get it.

Do not expect yourself to be totally consistent in any of these things.

Harry Ireton, Ph.D., Family Information Services, March 2005 · Minneapolis, MN

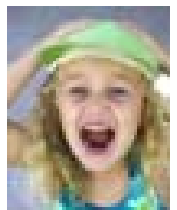
### QUOTE

*Let  
your  
kids  
see  
in  
you  
what  
you  
want  
to  
see  
in  
them.*  
Tony Danza

## Avoiding Power Struggles—As Toddlers Turn Two

- **ALLOW TIME** for your child to leave one activity before you expect him to do something else.
- **SLOW DOWN**, limit scheduling.
- **DON'T MAKE PROMISES.** Tell your child ten or fifteen minutes before company comes or before you go somewhere. She needs to know what is going to happen, but won't understand a rained-out picnic.
- Use **LET US...** “Let us put away the toys or rake the yard or...” Avoid asking “Shall we?” or saying “You...” Expect that you will do most or all of the work. Accept his help with thanks.
- Use **REPETITION** and **A SENSE OF PLACE AND ORDER** as your allies. Children love repetition of stories and daily patterns. Many also need to have things have places. “Books here! Toys here! Your toothbrush here!”
- Try **DIVERSION** as long as it works. “Let's go do this!” Use **REMOVAL** (from the situation) when it doesn't.
- Accept your child's need for the **FAMILIAR**. A toddler needs his blanket, his pacifier, his thumb, his mom, his dad and his special toys when struggling with “first adolescence.” It is a scary time.
- **IGNORE** the misbehaviors that are not very important to you.
- **AVOID** giving your child too many choices.
- **KEEP LIMITS TO A MINIMUM.** Then enforce them.
- **BE CAREFUL** when you or your child are tired.
- Don't take your child's attacks on you personally. She would resist any parent. Realize that there are times when your child will not be cooperative. Try singing your way out of a situation!

Delores Fletcher, M.A. Family Information Services, March 2005 · Minneapolis, MN





## ACTIVITY FOR FAMILIES

Ask your child to pick a favorite family photograph, and to write a poem or story to remember what was happening in the picture to go with it. Explain that not all types of poems rhyme, and that therefore their poem does not necessarily have to rhyme. This is often what scares children about writing poetry. Afterwards you could read the whole story that relates to their story/poem and their photograph. Put it on the refrigerator or a place where everyone can enjoy it!

### Parental Growing Pains

Your child tells you in no uncertain terms to “Go to \_\_\_\_\_,” or some variation thereof. At first you were dumbstruck. Where have I gone wrong? “Why can’t it be the way it was?” And then it hits you, your child is growing up.

**“Go to \_\_\_\_\_,” is a teenager’s way of telling you to back off:**

- \* “You’ve taught me to live my life, now give me some room to do it!”
- \* “Let me make my choices.”
- \* “Let me make some bad decisions so that I can learn from them.”
- \* “Let me have a few bad friends so I can get used by them and learn how to pick better friends”
- \* “Let me blow all my money in one day so that I can learn how to budget my resources.”
- \* “Let me see what happens when I .....
- \* “Give me the opportunity to learn by applying or not applying all the things you’ve been teaching me all these years. Then I’ll really know for myself!”
- \* “And don’t worry. I know that you’ll be there for me when I need you. You’ve taught me that, but for right now, I need for you to back off, to give me some room, to give me some space. But you know what? I’ve got far too many hormones in my system right now to sit down and think how to say this all in a nice and civilized way... So for now, I just need to say, “Go to \_\_\_\_\_,” because I know you’ll know what I mean. You’ve always been able to figure out what I mean, what I’m feeling, and I know you will know. So, forgive the shorthand, but I’ve got a lot of living to do, so let me get on with it.”

“It’s just teenage, hormone induced shorthand,” and you think, “I can live .” Let them use what you’ve taught them.

Randy Hayes, Polo, IL. Family Information Services, September 2002 · Minneapolis, MN

Let them learn from small mistakes now, so they won’t make bigger ones later. Consequences teach more than punishment. A consequence should be RSVP—Reasonable, Simple, Valuable and Practical. If it’s all four of those, they’ll get it.

Barbara Coloroso, *Kids Are Worth It!*

Check our website:

[www.macombcountymi.gov/msuextension](http://www.macombcountymi.gov/msuextension)

- ☉ Calendar of upcoming programs
- ☉ Program descriptions
- ☉ Volunteer opportunities
- ☉ The past years Parenting Views

**Want to be on our mailing list? Please call!** Note: Parenting Views may be reproduced and distributed. If copied please copy intact with logos & resources. Please let us know the number distributed for our tally.

Michigan State University Extension Programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, or family status. MSU, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, and Macomb County Board of Commissioners cooperating. MSU is an affirmative action equal opportunity institution.



Copy cats permitted!



MSU Extension ~ Family Programs  
21885 Dunham Rd. - Suite 12  
Clinton Township, MI 48036  
Phone: (586) 469-5180